



## Iowa Range

statewide

## Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.  
*Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats* CD-ROM.

## masked shrew

*Sorex cinereus*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates  
Class: Mammalia  
Order: Insectivora  
Family: Soricidae

## Features

An adult masked shrew is between 3 1/2 and 4 1/2 inches long, including the tail. It has a pointed nose, tan feet, and a gray-brown body with the belly, underside of the tail, and sides a lighter color. The tail is light colored below and dark above.

## Natural History

The masked shrew lives in damp places with good ground cover like sedge meadows, wet prairies, drainage ditches, peatlands, bottomland forests, swamps, and fencerows. It is nocturnal and eats insects and other invertebrates. It has a high metabolic rate and eats more than its own body weight in food in a day. Breeding occurs in late March or early April. The gestations period is about 18 days. Litter size ranges from four to eight.

## Habitats

wet prairies and fens; bottomland forests

## Iowa Status

common; native